

Outperforming business

In a second report, *Mónica Higuera, Richard Estrada and John Nutting* review what they saw at Cannex

At The Canmaker Technical Conference held in May in Atlanta, the managing director for Deutsche Bank Securities in the US, Mark Wilde, provided an investors' perspective on the canmaking sector.

Wilde said canmakers probably had "the happiest shareholders in the packaging industry," due to the canmaking sector significantly outperforming the market over the last decade.

Why? Because this is a sector with relatively low cyclical volatility and investors like the stability of its margins, he said.

Wilde advised canmakers against overpaying and overgrowing and said that investors liked a disciplined approach to growth and new capacity.

As for key challenges, he said the industry must innovate, but needs to remain competitive.

Meanwhile canmakers looking for innovation and machinery that enable them to improve their processes while achieving savings visited the exhibition hall at Cannex to meet with the industry's leading equipment providers.

First high-speed bottle maker to be delivered next year

Key packaging executives from Coca-Cola were taking a keen interest in the aluminium bottle making system that was the highlight of the Mall+Herlan booth at Cannex.

Although an earlier version of such a machine has been in use at Exal in the US which has supplied Coca-Cola, The Bottlemaker is an altogether more complex offering.

Core of the system is a unit with two levels of seven horizontal-axis rotary turntables, each with 12 tool pockets running at up to 250rpm.

Business development chief Dr Bernd Ullmann explained its potential. "Output is a balance between the complexity of the container shape and the speed of the machine," he said. "It depends on how many times you recircle the containers."

Called 'The world's first high-speed bottle necking and shaping machine', it takes printed and coated preforms from a number of D&I lines and delivers finished, washed, dried and leak-tested bottles to pallets.

With tailor-made tooling for a specific shape of container made for high volumes, the output could be up to 3,000 items per minute. When a greater variety of more complex shapes are needed the more recirculation is necessary so the output would be 500 per minute.

"Our focus is on complex containers which need more necking operations, so the more likely configuration is for shaping, necking and threading operations," said Ullmann. The first dedicated 500cpm line, which is currently being 'fine tuned', will be delivered to an undisclosed customer in 2014. This will also include a printer and coater.

Mall + Herlan, Woeschbacher Str. 33, Pfintzal D-76327, Germany. Tel: 49 721 9460 110. Fax: 49 721 9460 199. Website: www.mall-herlan.de

SLAC to expand into D&I bodymakers
Growing Chinese canmaking equipment manufacturer SLAC Precision Equipment is planning to expand more into two-piece D&I systems, said chief executive Shu An.

The Suzhou-based firm has been specialising in end shell and conversion presses, with around 100 lines installed around the world, of which more than half are in China.

First step into D&I bodymaking systems was a cupping press installed at beverage can manufacturer Gaosen Packaging Container at the end of 2012. The Minster-based ten-out tooling was for the company's second line at Dezhou in Shandong Province, the original being supplied by Mercier and Standard Engineering from the US.

Shu An says that to make a better bodymaker "dynamic balance is the key" and he is looking at alternative mechanisms to achieve it. "It depends on a customer whether we will produce a complete line in

Shu An, boss of SLAC Precision Equipment in China, is planning to expand into D&I bodymaking systems



China," he said. "Local support helps."

To attract the highest quality of staff, SLAC is collaborating with Tsinghua University, of which Shu An is graduate, where he is supporting students in an MBA research programme into identifying overseas business opportunities.

SLAC Precision Equipment, 621 Shixu Road, Xukou Town, Wuzhong District, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province 215156, China. Tel: 86 512 6624 8533. Fax: 86 512 6624 8543. Website: www.slac.com.cn

Peelable ends: faster and more consumer friendly

Increasing sophistication in aluminium membrane easy-open-end technology was demonstrated at Cannex with the latest version of the Alufix Dry lid from Amcor Flexibles in Europe.

The Dry range of peel-off membranes is suitable for use with non-retorted products such as nuts, milk and infant formula, while the latest development, Alufix Dry



Dr Bernd Ullmann (left) explains the complexities of Mall+Herlan's high-speed bottle making system the first of which is being 'fine-tuned' for a customer

Exports now account for 30 percent of the company's sales and are forecast to become half of its business in the next two years, he added.

Jiangsu Guolian Plate, Luoyang Industrial Zone, Wujin District, Changzhou, Jiangsu 213104, China. Tel: 86 519 8852 1836. Fax: 86 519 8879 0908. Website: www.guolian-steel.com

Faster combination machine from China

Zhejiang Longwen Machinery was established in China 15 years ago and specializes in combination machines and end-making lines, including CNC sheet feed presses, liners and induction ovens.

The company was promoting its latest combination machine that runs at 600 cans per minute, compared to the previous 500cpm model; as well as its fully-automatic aerosol cone transfer press with operating speeds of 150 units a minute.

Zhejiang Longwen Machinery, Xinluotou, Lingang Industrial Park, Zhoushan, Zhejiang 316041, China. Tel: 86 580 309 1717. Fax: 86 580 309 1717. Website: www.longwen-mach.com

Welded drinks can demand on the rise again

Demand for three-piece welded steel beverage cans is on the rise again, mostly from China, said Jakob Guyer, managing director for canmaking at Swiss machinery specialist Soudronic during his presentation to The Canmaker Technical Conference at Cannex.

Received wisdom is that the two-piece D&I can has been supplanting welded cans around the world. Not so, said Guyer, who was reviewing the global markets for three-piece cans.

This year Soudronic celebrates 60 years since its founding, so it has a lot of historical data to call upon. Since 1953 it has installed 3,850 canmaking lines at 1,600 locations.

Smart, offers both better manufacturing and consumer benefits, said product development manager Dr Christoph Dietrich.

In addition to being free of BPA, melamine, PVC and VOCs using water-based technology the use of new polyester lacquer technology enables Dry Smart to have shorter sealing times, for higher productivity, while offering lower opening forces with the same pressure resistance.

Successes for the Alufix Retort version of the peelable membrane end include its use by Spam in South Korea and for tuna products in Spain.

Amcor Flexibles, Alusinged-Platz 1, Singen 78224, Germany. Te: 49 7731 802 700. Fax: 49 7731 802 095. Website: www.amcor.com



conveyors which is said to be ideal for applications where product orientation, belt life, and grease/oil buildup are concerns.

The system is claimed to eliminate overdrive by directly engaging the belt edge with the drum, allowing the belt to drive independently of drum-belt edge friction, so the belt operates with zero slip.

Intralox, 201 Laitram Lane, Harahan, Louisiana 70123, USA. Tel: 1 504 733 0463. Fax: 1 504 734 0063. Website: www.intralox.com

Growing exports for Chinese tinplate Jiangsu Guolian Plate has capacity to make 100,000 tonnes of tinplate a year in Changzhou, China.

The company first exhibited at Cannex in 2012 in Guangzhou where it met several new customers and exports sales have since grown by ten percent, said the general manager of the export department, Peter Nie.

Conveyor belt for UV applications

Conveying systems specialist Intralox showcased its ultraviolet resistant and flame retardant (UVFR) belt material, available both for vacuum and cut-edge-down applications.

The new material was launched in January and is said to have an enhanced resistance to UV light, be easily retrofitted without the need for a sprocket change, and offer improved safety due to the lower fire risk.

Intralox was also introducing its patented Direct Drive Systems for spiral



Growing exports: the Jiangsu Guolian Plate team (l to r) Lucy Wang, Ariel Zhang, Jason Wang and Peter Nie

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Guyer revealed that the production of three-piece steel cans, often favoured because of their robust resistance to the pasteurising process necessary for retorted drinks such as juices and teas, declined globally from 26.0 billion in 1993 to less than 19.0bn in 2000, since when demand has grown to 25.2bn in 2012.

Soudronic's Jakob Guyer: demand for three-piece welded beverage cans is growing again, thanks to China



This has mostly been as a result of demand for retorted drinks in China where production of three-piece cans grew from 15.0bn in 2011 to 16.8bn in 2012, said Guyer, who added that canmakers such as ORG Packaging were at the forefront of lightweighting initiatives with the down-gauging of cans from 0.15mm to 0.12mm.

Soudronic, Industriestrasse 35, Bergdietenikon CH-8962, Switzerland. Tel: 41 447 436 666. Fax: 41 447 436 910. Website: www.soudronic.com

Energy savings and improvements from Inghor

Inghor from Spain supplies coating lines, drying ovens, air purification systems and heat treatment ovens.

The company has developed the so-called Fast-Payback system to reduce the energy consumption of metal coating lines, and that can be incorporated in new lines or in existing ones with recuperative thermal oxidation systems. It claims an average gas saving of around 40 percent.

Inghor's vacuum stackers are said to increase throughput and reduce sheet damage from the pneumatic apertures, enabling sheets down to 0.10mm to be handled.

Meanwhile Inghor's new scraping system to clean the coatings from compression roller is said to increase the life of the blade four-fold, and enable one minute changeovers. It is also said to provide a uniform pressure of the blade across the width of the compression roller, and improved scraping, even on white coats.

Ingeniería Y Hornos Inghor, Avda. J.L. Goyoaga 32, 3o Dpto. 306, Erandio 48950, Spain. Tel: 34 944 411 012. Fax: 34 944 411 066. Website: www.inghor.es

Digital meets need for 'new style of printing'

With the cosmetics aerosol can business increasingly demanding smaller batches of containers suitable for a range of markets and brand extensions, there is a "strong commercial argument for a new style of printing" said Alexander Hinterkopf at Cannex.

The boss of Germany's Hinterkopf, a leader in aluminium aerosol canmaking lines, was explaining the background to the company's own digital printing system which will be making its world debut at the K show in Düsseldorf in October.

"Customers have up to 30 different versions of a deodorant that goes to dozens of markets, so the filling line needs flexibility to offer just-in-time as well as just-in-sequence," he said. "With digital printing there are no printing plates so there is no start-up time."

He has set up a small digital printing factory at Hinterkopf's base at Eislingen where a service for small runs will be offered. "This is so customers can grow the market with runs of about 5,000 cans."

With resolution as high as 900dpi the system can print text as small as 1.4pt. Using inkjet application technology from the UK and inks from Japan, the system can print 50mm-diameter cans at 120 per minute.

For aerosol can necking and shaping systems, Hinterkopf was showing a 50-pocket tool carrier. With more pockets than the previous 40-pocket version, smaller increments between the tool stages enable thinner and lighter weight cans and bottles to be formed.

Hinterkopf, Postbox 12 52, Gutenberg 5, Eislingen/Fils, D-73049, Germany. Tel: 49 7161 85012. Fax: 49 7161 850125. Website: www.hinterkopf.de

Larger facility for China Hanjiang

China Hanjiang says it was the first company in China to design and manufacture induction drying machines, powder spray coaters, and machines for rectangular luncheon meat cans and chemical square cans.

The company is moving in June to a new facility that with an area of 60,000sqm is ten times larger than its previous one, said Zane Xiao from the sales department.

China Hanjiang, Chenghua Industrial Area, Shantou Guangdong, Chenghai, Guangdong 515824, China. Tel: 86 1382 5858 126. Website: www.chinahanjiang.com

Universal grinder for can tooling

US company Basaran Grinder manufactures CNC grinding machines as well as inspection equipment, tooling rings, and



Looking up: Alexander Hinterkopf with samples of his hi-res digitally-printed containers

Based in Knoxville, Tennessee, Independent Canmaker specialises in orders lower than 15 pallets, said D&I process engineer Domingo González



offers re-grinding services for existing tooling.

Basaran was demonstrating one of its universal grinders at the booth, designed to grind all can tooling components including ironing dies, punches and redraw sleeves, and featuring B-axis direct-drive technology and easy-to-use software.

By grinding all tooling in-house, consistency can be achieved and tool life increased by at least a quarter, said company president Seref Basaran.

Basaran Grinder, 100 Laser Ct., Hauppauge, New York 11788, USA. Tel: 1 631 273 3030. Fax: 1 631 273 3037. Website: www.basarangrinder.com

Savings on maintenance and seamer parts

While much of the industry players at Cannex looked to Central and South America, some pointed out that opportunities also abound in Africa and eastern Europe.



Seref Basaran shows off his universal grinder for D&L tooling



China Hanjiang's Zane Xiao (left) said the company was moving to a larger facility last month

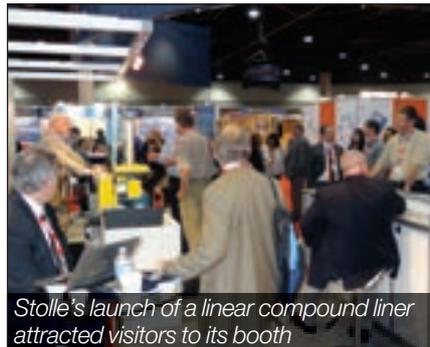


Among Cannex visitors were Dr Brian Kim and Jimmy Kim from the R&D department of One Jung Can Manufacturing in Korea



Managing director of Tubex in Germany, Leopold Werdich (pictured left with company owner Dr Cornelius Grupp) said they are now running three monobloc can lines in Brazil

Supply coordinator Luis De Cezar from Crown in Brazil – the company plans to open its fourth can plant in the country next year



Stolle's launch of a linear compound liner attracted visitors to its booth



Actega's Teresa Ramos talks BPA-free with Pelliconi's Marco Checchi

Italian-based Imeta has benefited from some recent projects in Africa. The company designs and manufactures spare parts for seaming machines, and has seen an increase in the demand for parts used in Angelus seamers.

"Recently we had a great project in South Africa and another in Mauritania in northern Africa, a French-speaking country," said sales manager Roberto Baroni, noting the surge in popularity is less about technological breakthroughs and more about reliability. "Not such high technology, but a big savings on parts. We find that it is important to be versatile, as well as quick. Many customers prefer to buy their parts from one company, and they want them quickly. They don't want to buy a part and have to sit there, that's money they can be using somewhere else. That's why we must have fast delivery."

Imeta also used Cannex to show off its inverter drive kit for the Angelus 60L, a retrofit that allows the mechanical clutch

– and its 30 different parts – to be pulled from the seamer. It uses a frequency converter to start and stop the seamer, as well as to vary the speed.

"It's a big savings on the maintenance, and the parts themselves," Baroni said. "Every part you remove, it's less of a problem and less cost in maintenance."

Imeta, Strada Burla 279A, Parma 43122, Italy. Tel: 39 0521 168 8811. Fax: 39 0521 1688 819. Website: www.imetasrl.com

Increased drawing ratio for food cans

While Imeta provides an example of opportunities in Africa, Germany's Gebrüder Leonhardt says east European countries should not be overlooked when searching for new customers. Markets such as Poland and Ukraine, for example, still demand attention from equipment manufacturers.

Answering a call from customers in the region, Gebrüder Leonhardt – also known because of its roots as Blema Kircheis –

was showing off its new process that increases the drawing ratio for making two-piece cans, enabling canmakers to increase the volume with the same amount of material: the canstock for a 100-gram can now produce a 200-gram can. It also offers the option to switch from three-piece to two-piece cans.

"There is no change for the (processor) who is putting meat or fish into the can," said Reimar Friess, Gebrüder Leonhardt's sales director. "That's important to note. They don't have to make alterations to their line."

"Our customers were looking for an economical solution to increase the draw ratio," said Friess. His company has hundreds of presses in the former Soviet Union and Baltic States, with many more working in Asia and South America.

Gebrüder Leonhardt Blema Kircheis, Erdmann-Kirchies-Str. 13-15, Aue D-08280, Germany. Tel: 49 3771 278 200. Fax: 49 3771 278 241. Website: www.blema.de ▶

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INX expands in the UK

There's still plenty of business to be done in Europe, as exhibitors at Cannex were quick to point out.

INX International's chief executive Rick Clendenning had plenty to talk about, unveiling three new ink products and preparing for the June opening of his company's 40,000 square-foot facility at Heywood in the UK. The plant is 75 percent larger than its predecessor, and the company says it will be the largest production facility outside the US for metal decorating ink for the two-piece can market. The facility also will produce ink for Europe's three-piece canmakers, and will tailor its educational seminars to meet a customer's request.



INX International's metal decorating manager Alex Follosio showed a range of special inks

The metal decorating market accounts for 25 percent of the company's sales, said Clendenning, who is aiming to grab a larger share with its new products – the TP plus base system, INXCure TP UV plus base system and AP retort II.

INX International Ink, 150 N. Martingale, Suite 700, Schaumburg, Illinois 60173, USA. Tel: 1 630 382 1906. Fax: 1 847 969 9758. Website: www.inxinternational.com

New material for necking dies

Sandvik Hard Materials revealed that it is working on a new material for necking dies that has the same density and thermal expansion than ceramic, and that is tougher than carbide, with can plant trials expected by the end of the summer.

Sandvik Hard Materials, Villa Strand, Sandviken SE-81181, Sweden. Tel: 46 2626 0000. Fax: 46 2626 6920. Website: www.hardmaterials.sandvik.com

Baosteel starts up its first overseas plant

Manufacture of beverage cans at Baosteel's first canmaking venture outside of China has started at its plant at VSIP Industrial Park, in Binh Duong province, Vietnam.

Lew Connor, who leads the operations division at Stolle Machinery which supplied much of the equipment and engineering, confirmed at Cannex that aluminium cans were being made at the

US\$86 million plant, construction work for which started in March 2012.

A joint-venture between Baosteel Metal and Baosteel Singapore, Vietnam Baosteel Canmaking Co Ltd is the sixth beverage can plant to be built by the Chinese group.

The plant has capacity to make 700 million cans in 33cl and 50cl sizes.

Connor added that in Vietnam, conversions to the smaller 202 ends is advancing. "I reckon that the region will be completely converted by the second quarter of 2014," he said.

Baosteel, 1888 Yueluo Road, Baoshan District, Shanghai 201908, China. Tel: 86 21 6180 5678. Fax: 86 21 6180 1188. Website: www.baosteelmetal.com

Expansion for NCI plant in Bangkok

In Thailand, the joint-venture beverage can plant at Bangkok run by Swan Industries and Toyo Seikan is having a third manufacturing line installed.

Work at the 'New Can Innovation' (NCI) plant, which already houses a 'Dry-DWP TULC line and an aluminium D&I line, is said to be ahead of schedule with the first equipment supplied by Stolle Machinery (which is owned by Toyo Seikan) having arrived just before the end of 2012.

Initially expected to make 33cl aluminium cans, the line will be convertible to 25cl.

Stolle Machinery, 6949 South Potomac Street, Centennial, Colorado 80112, USA. Tel: 1 303 708 9044. Fax: 1 303 708 9045. Website: www.stollemachinery.com

Choco crisps help with the devil's detail

Trade events like Cannex succeed partly through the efforts of show builders such as Freeman, who look after the construction of the booths.

But appreciation of this is rarely shown, which is hardly surprising in the rush to get set up. An exception came to light when *The Canmaker* was talking to Jeff Shroud on the DRT Inc booth where the latest in conversion press technology was on show.

Denise Johnston, Freeman's sales manager in Atlanta, rushed over to tell Jeff that the team thought the 'choco crisps' he sent them were amazing.

Choco crisps? Jeff explained: "Dayton in Ohio where we are based is a big centre for chocolate products and potato crisps. So a speciality is to combine them, and I brought some down to give to the Freeman people. The devil is in the detail when setting up a booth. The riggers were really impressed."

DRT Mfg., 618 Greenmount Boulevard, Dayton, Ohio 45419, USA. Tel: 1 937 298 7391. Fax: 1 937 298 7190. Website: www.drmtfgco.com